My Reasons

. . . for . . .

Joining the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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London, England

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The object that I have had in view in writing this article explanatory of my reasons for leaving the Church of England and joining the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is to comply as far as possible with the wishes of those of my relatives and friends who have expressed a desire to know something of the teachings of the Latter-day Saints, and also the reasons which have led me to reject the faith of my fathers. It was of course not possible for me, within the ordinary limits of private correspondence, to enter with sufficient fulness into so important a subject, or satisfactorily to explain to each of my enquirers all that they might wish to know. At the same time it appeared to me both fair and right towards my relatives that I should make some attempt to show them to the best of my power the grounds upon which I had considered it necessary to cut myself adrift from a church to which I had hitherto belonged, and of which they themselves were still members. It was in order to attain this object that I decided, after due consideration, to write out as fully and as clearly as I could the most important of the reasons that had led me to take the step I have taken, and then to have a few copies of these printed for circulation, not only among those who had asked me for my reasons for the course that I had thought necessary to adopt, but also among all who may still feel in any way a kind interest in me.

In sending out the following pages, then, I would ask our Heavenly Father, in the name of His Son, our Lord Jesus, to let His blessings rest upon what I have written so far as it may be in strict accordance with His truth, and with His holy word and will.

London, May 24, 1897.

Pamphlet Collection
Duke Divinity School

PREFACE TO THE SECOND AMERICAN EDITION

The issue of the second American edition of "My Reasons" (a designation which this pamphlet seems to have received by way of brevity, and by which name it is apparently best known), has afforded me an opportunity of expressing my views regarding the Latter-day Saints, as formed after a personal association with them extending over a period of several months, in various parts of the State of Utah. I feel, too, that it is incumbent upon me to do this, inasmuch as the characteristics which I recorded of that people when writing "My Reasons," were gathered, as I therein stated, from information received from others and not from my own personal knowledge of them.

Since I penned the pages of this little work, however, I have paid two visits to Utah, and have become personally acquainted with the Latter-day Saints, in Salt Lake City, and in several other towns of that State. On the first of these visits I resided with two well known families of Saints, and obtained thereby the best possible opportunity of mixing freely in the society of this people and of forming a just and correct estimate of them; and I am glad to be able to add, that the experience I thus gained fully justified the general reputation of the people that I had previously given from hearsay. That they, in common with the rest of mankind, have their weakness and failings is only to be expected, and there will even be found some among them who can claim to be Latter-day Saints in little else than name, but, taking the people as a whole, I have found them essentially God fearing, honest, upright, with a firm faith in their Heavenly Father, strong in their testimonies regarding the divinity of the great latter-day work in which they are engaged, and in their belief of the great destiny which awaits them.

Among the Saints, as among other Christian people, will be found educated and intelligent men and women. Education is a special feature with them, and it is by no means uncommon to find in this community, those who have studied, and those who are at the present time studying vocal and instrumental music and painting in the principal centers of art in Europe and in the eastern parts of the United States. Musical talent seems to be decidedly conspicuous among them. Various important positions in the State, calling for such qualifications as education, intelligence, ability, and honesty, have been, and are now being filled by Latter-day Saints; while there are those who, having fully qualified themselves in the legal, medical, journalistic,

and commercial professions, are following their various vocations with credit and profit to themselves, and advantage to the people of Utah.

I am now paying my third visit to the capital city of that State, and see no reason to modify the opinion I formed of the Saints during my stay with them in 1901.

If this personal testimony that I have been able to offer, can in any way tend to remove misconceptions that may have been formed regarding the Latter-day Saints, my object will have been accomplished, and I may add, that I feel sure that the good qualities of this people have only to be better known in the world, to be more fully appreciated by fair and unprejudiced minds.

R. M. BRYCE THOMAS.

Salt Lake City, December 9, 1902.

Hon. H. B. Elliott 12/5/49

MY REASONS

FOR

Joining the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Previous to my visiting Salt Lake City, Utah, in the months of July and August, 1896, I knew nothing of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints beyond the fact that it was commonly known as the Mormon Church.

During my stay of nearly a month in Salt Lake City I heard from those quite unconnected with their Church that the so-called Mormons, but whom I shall hereafter designate as "the Latter-day Saints," were the most peace-loving and quiet of people, honest, thrifty, well behaved and good citizens, and exceedingly kind to their poor, who were so well looked after that public begging was not known among them.

I found that this people possessed a beautiful Temple and a very fine Tabernacle, with grounds prettily laid out and well cared for; their houses, too, were neat and picturesque, with nice gardens attached to them, while they could boast of a Tabernacle Choir of about 600 men and women, the best that I have ever heard. Everything to do with this people appeared to be most excellently managed and looked after, while their missionaries were preaching the Gospel in most parts of the world, having gone out altogether at their own cost, and at a very great sacrifice of self in all cases. The Church organization of the Saints, too, appeared to be complete and effective, and it became evident to me that they were a very interesting and extraordinary people, and I therefore decided to secure some of their books, especially the Book of Mormon, in order to learn more of their character and doctrines.

This I did, and after I had read some of their publications a light seemed to dawn upon me, and I commenced to wonder if we were living in the times of the great apostasy which had been predicted in so many parts of the inspired scriptures. I quote a few references to these predictions, but these are by no

means all. (Isaiah 24:1-5; Matthew 24:4-31; Acts 20:29, 30; II Thess. 2:3, 8, 9, 10; I Timothy 4:1-3; II Timothy 3:1-5; II Timothy 4:3, 4; Revelation, chapters 1, 2 and 3; Revelation 17:2-5.) My mind expanded still more when I had carefully read through the Book of Mormon, a book which I found to be replete with divine truths and elevating principles, and which bore the very strongest testimony to the truths contained in the Bible, both in the Old and the New Testament; a book, too, which made plain and easy of understanding so many parts of the Bible that appear at present to be vague or regarding which the numerous sects of Christendom have set themselves against each other in argument and dispute. In that book (Book of Mormon) it is clearly stated that the great apostate church would be upon the earth when the book itself would come to light. In Revelation St. John spoke of the apostate church of the latter days as "Babylon" (Rev. 14:8), and as "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (Rev. 17-5), and he added that this apostate church was to rule peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues (Rev. 17:15), which would make it almost if not quite universal.

Now the question which concerned me was whether the Church of England, of which I was a member, was a portion of that church to which the Bible predictions in respect to the great apostasy referred, or whether the church of Rome or some other Christian church, was the only one alluded to. That it was a Christian church to which the texts in the Bible referred is not, I think, likely to be denied by any one, and indeed we know that even in as early days as those in which John the Revelator himself lived, he discovered the commencement of apostasy in the seven truest churches of Christians among those then existing. (Rev. chap. 1, 2 and 3.) The other branches of the then Christian church would appear to have gone altogether wrong, for these seven were, it seems, the only ones worth divine mention, and they too were becoming so corrupt even in those early days that God threatened them with complete rejection.

In order to enable me to arrive at a just and proper conclusion, it was necessary for me to turn to the Bible as my guide, and to ascertain therefrom what constituted the primitive Church of Christ, and what were the exact doctrines and ordinances as laid down by Him and as taught and practiced by His Apostles. Having ascertained these facts, I had then to compare them with the constitution of the Church of England and with the doctrines and ordinances as taught and practiced

by her. It appeared to me to be quite evident that if the primitive church as planted by Jesus Christ and built up by His Apostles and servants, with all its organization and powers, had not been maintained in its completeness and perfection, or if any of Christ's doctrines had been altered, or His Ordinances changed in any one respect without due authority, this could only have come about through false teachers arising in the church as St. Paul had predicted would be the case after his days. (II Tim. 4:3, 4). I felt that I should then be compelled to admit that the Church of England had fallen into error, and that therefore the texts in the scriptures regarding the latter day apostasy could not but refer to her as well as to the other churches of Christendom which were teaching and practicing a gospel not in accordance with that found in the Bible. And further that the following inspired prophecy of Isaiah pointed to her equally as much as to the other churches. "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant" (Isa. 24:5), or, in other words, apostatized. One of tne Latter-day Saints has very appropriately written the following words in this connection: "It is contrary to scripture and to reason to suppose that Christ would set up two or more discordant religious systems to distract mankind, and cause strife and contention. God cannot create confusion. His mind is one, the minds of men are various, so that when we see various opposing religions in Christendom, it is conclusive evidence that men have been engaged in their invention, and that they have established but very imperfect imitations of the true Church of Christ." (See Mormon Doctrine, Sixth Leaf.)

The true church must always conform to the pattern of the primitive church of Jesus Christ and His Apostles in every respect, unless there is clear and indisputable authority in the scriptures for a divergence in any particular, and I have not been able to find any such authority in any portion of the New Testament. So that if the Church of England (for that is the only church with which I am concerned at present) is dissimilar to her organization or in her doctrines and ordinances from the primitive church, she can be but a very imperfect imitation of that church at best.

Well, on turning to the Bible I found that the church which Jesus Christ planted on earth consisted of "First apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." (I Cor.

12:28.) Elders, too, were ordained in all churches. (Acts 14:23.) Then again, evangelists and pastors are mentioned. (Eph. 4:11.) We further read why all these inspired apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers were absolutely necessary in the church, namely, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." (Eph. 4:12.) St. Paul in writing to the Corinthians very clearly described the Church of Christ, and he showed that not one of its members could be dispensed with without thoroughly disorganizing the body. He was then specially speaking of the various gifts of the Holy Spirit of God, which were considered so essential to the maintenance of the true church of Christ, and it will be seen that He particularly forbade any one of the members of the church (Christ's body) to say of those miraculous gifts, "We have no need of thee." (I Cor. 12:21-28.)

Now, I vainly look for a church of this pattern in the Church of England or in any of the other churches of Christendom, except in that of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I can find no apostles, no prophets, no workers of miracles, no discerners of spirits, no gifts and no interpretation of tongues; but I find popes, cardinals and archbishops. By what authority then was the organization of Christ's church altered, and her most important members lopped off? For I have already made mention of the reasons given by St. Paul why inspired apostles, prophets, and the wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit were absolutely necessary in the church of Jesus Christ as founded by Him. And I fail to discover any good reason why the church should now be able to get on without them any more than it found itself able to get on without them in former times. On the contrary, I am clearly of the opinion that they must be just as essential now as in the days of old, and that to their absence must be attributed all discord, ill-feeling, and confusion that reign supreme in and between the very numerous sects in Christendom, all of which profess themselves to be members of the true church of Jesus Christ. All these different sects or churches, if I may so call them, are admittedly without the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit spoken of by St. Paul, for they do not teach nor do they appear to allow that gifts and prophecy and miracles are actually necessary in these days. Indeed, they apparently consider that these gifts are not needed at all; the very thing which St. Paul forbids them to do when he says that, in respect to the Spirit's wonderful gifts, no member of Christ't church must say, "We have no need

of thee." (I Cor. 12:21.) So that prophets and workers of miracles have altogether ceased to be, although I can find no authority whatever in the Bible for their ceasing to exist. Inasmuch as they were necessary "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12), how can saints now be perfected or the work of the ministry be efficiently and satisfactorily performed, or the body of Christ (the true church) be edified in these days? The Bible shows us that it was always through prophets that God revealed His will, commanded and instructed His church under all the changing and trying circumstances through which she had had to pass since the world commenced. And it seems to me to be altogether opposed to scripture and to reason to conclude that in these admittedly evil days, it is unnecessary for Him to intimate His will and commands, and to instruct His people in exactly the same way, in order that His church may continue to be guided through the great difficulties and trials that must beset her. For the teachings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles I prefer to go direct to the Bible and be guided thereby, than to go to any of the churches of Christendom which teach doctrines not in accordance therewith. For instance, Jesus Himself said that miraculous signs should follow believers, (Mark 16:17, 18), but the churches do not teach this doctrine. Then again St. Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, recorded that apostles and prophets were necessary in the church, not only for his days, but "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Eph. 4:13, 14.) How different this appears to be from the teachings of the various churches and sects in Christendom. In this passage of scripture which I have just quoted, St. Paul not only tells us how long apostles and prophets would be necessary in the church of Jesus Christ, but also how the church would be affected if prophecy ceased. As inspired by God, he distinctly asserts that apostles and prophets would be required till we attain to perfect men, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. I think it will be admitted that we have not reached this perfection as yet. Again, St. Paul showed that if we had no apostles and prophets, the church would be tossed to and fro, and car-

ried about with every wind of doctrine, etc. What do we see in the churches of Christendom but this very result, when we contemplate the numerous discordant and opposing religious denominations and sects, all teaching diverse doctrines and ordinances? Thus it seems evident to me that a church, devoid of inspired prophets and the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, all of which played so very important a part, in the opinion of the apostles of Christ, in the primitive church, cannot possibly be anything but in error. This view is strengthened by the words of St. Peter, who tells us that the Spirit would continue to manifest His marvelous powers in the true church while the world lasted, if the people would submit themselves to the ordinances of the Gospel, and obey God's commandments. He was preaching on the day of Pentecost, just after the Holy Ghost had fallen upon the assembled disciples, and had sat upon each of them in the form of cloven tongues like as of fire (Acts 2:3), and he called upon all his hearers to repent, and to be baptized for the remission of their sins, and he promised them the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then he went on to say that this promise was not for these people only, but unto them and their children, and also to all who were afar off, even as many as the Lord our God should call. (Acts 2:38, 39.)

Now in view of all this that I have culled from the scriptures, I cannot understand how any one has authority to say that in these days we have no need for inspired Prophets, and for those wonderful gifts of the Spirit, without which, we are told by the New Testament writers, we cannot reach to the perfect man, and to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

It appears therefore quite evident to me that if I in all humility and sincerity accept the teachings of God, as made clear in the Bible, it becomes impossible for me to admit, or to flatter myself as a member of the Church of England, that any church of professing Christians on the earth, which denies the urgent need of inspired prophets and apostles, and the glorious and miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, can be the church which Jesus Christ founded and His apostles built up in the first days of Christianity. In fact it seems to me that where there is not sufficient faith to obtain new revelation and the ministry of angels, all of which are promised under the true Gospel, there cannot possibly be the true church of Christ. The scripture also, which is given for our instruction, tells us "Where there is no vision, the people perish." (Prov. 29:18.)

It is also logical to suppose that a church which denies the need of the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit cannot well have that Spirit guiding it, for the whole history of the primitive church shows us that wherever the Holy Spirit was poured down upon any one and especially on the apostles and prophets and the other ministers of Christ, He manifested Himself in prophesyings, healings, tongues and other ways. God no doubt speaks to all His children throughout the world in some measure by His Spirit, the still small voice of conscience, but the Holy Spirit in His full and wonderful manifestations, that Spirit of knowledge, and wisdom, and of revelation, is only to be found where there is the true church of Christ. Again, Jesus Himself tells us that "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come." (John 16:13.) This is the gift of prophecy. Do we see anything of this kind in the Church of England, or in the Church of Rome, or in any of the numerous denominations of Christians anywhere — churches and denominations which by their dissensions and different teachings go far to distract mankind and confound the earnest seeker after truth? It is when the spirit of prophecy, of healings, and of tongues is wanting that the people are led by the teachings of men, darkness overspreads the world, errors begin to multiply, heresies to spring up, and nothing but a form of godliness remains while its powers are denied.

Again, where the Holy Spirit manifests Himself there must of necessity be unity and peace, for He is a Spirit of unity, and Jesus Himself prayed that all His children might be one, even as He and His Father in heaven were one. (John 17:11, 20 to 23.)

Peter Young, an English writer, records the following comment on this prayer. "Our Lord seems to have a vision, if we may venture so to speak, of His church as one body, penetrated with the Divine Spirit, radiant with the brightness of His presence, its members living together in faith and love, the kingdom of heaven upon earth, exhibiting such a spectacle of love and holiness, that the world might be led to acknowledge that they were the special objects of the Father's love." We can thus see what it was that Jesus earnestly desired and prayed for. There were to be no divisions and no dissensions, but all were to be of one faith and doctrine as taught by Him, and one in all love and holiness of life; and a perusal of a part of the 16th

chapter of St. John's Gospel will show that, just previous to His uttering this desire of His heart, Christ had promised His disciples to send them the Comforter to guide them into all truth, for said He, "He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." (John 16:7-14.) Now does it seem possible to suppose that this Spirit of Unity, this Comforter, whom Jesus Christ was to send in order to show His followers how to grow like Him, and to guide them into all truth, can be guiding the numerous, contending, discordant churches of Christendom who exhibit toward each other bitterness and hatred, which not so many years ago culminated even in the shedding of human blood! The Church of England, with whom I am at present concerned, is split up into Ritualistic, High, Broad, and Low Church, all at variance more or less in their ceremonies and ordinances, and in their very teachings. Surely it would rather seem as if the Church were moved upon by a spirit of discord, confusion, and evil passions than by a spirit of unity, peace, and love for if this glorious Spirit whom Jesus sent down after His ascension into Heaven, were really permeating the church, we could not but clearly discern His presence in His wonderful manifestations as of old, and in the unity of faith, that the word of God leads us to expect would always prevail till the end of time, when we all should reach perfection, even to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, (Eph. 4:13), and so long, too, as there remained any on earth whom the Lord our God should call. (Acts 2:39.) Why then has the Spirit now ceased to manifest His presence? Well, it appears to me that the reason may be found in the fact that both teachers and people have drifted into error, and have set up ordinances and doctrines which do not resemble those of Christ's primitive church, or have rejected some of those formerly practiced and taught by that church. What! some will ask, do you mean to say that the Church of England is practicing and teaching erroneous doctrines and ordinances? If so, we should like to know wherein the errors lie. Yes, I reply, such seems to be the case, and I shall now proceed to point the errors out.

In the primitive church existed the ordinance of anointing the sick with oil and praying over them with mighty faith. Is this practiced now in the Church of England, and if not, why not? If the faith of the early Christians (and very strong faith, such as honors God, was required) existed in these days, would not the church continue to use this same wonderful

power for good as of old? It is however cried down now, and this ordinance is altogether rejected and considered too ridiculous for these enlightened days, though perhaps good enough for those poor creatures who lived in the benighted past. Where also is the ordinance of laying on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost with all His gracious gifts? This was evidently a most important and necessary ordinance in the teachings of the Apostles of the primitive church, and invariably followed that of Baptism. And the New Testament is replete with instances of the wonderful way in which the Holy Spirit used to manifest Himself among those converts, who had obeyed the teachings of the Apostles, and had humbly and faithfully submitted themselves to both the ordinances. He still manifests Himself in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as very many can testify; but such manifestations are not taught or looked for in the Church of England, even in the ordinance of confirmation, and therefore they could not occur for want of faith, if for no other reason.

Next I will take the ordinance of baptism. Is there any similarity between that practiced in the early church of the days of the Apostles and that practiced in the Church of England at the present day? None that I can see. In the first place, the form of baptism is not the same. Baptism by immersion is that to which the Lord Jesus submitted Himself in order to fulfill all righteousness (Matt. 3:15), and to become obedient in all things, and thus it behooves us to become obedient also. He was baptized by immersion as an example to us, and this is the baptism taught and practiced by His Apostles and servants. (Romans 6:3, 4, 5.) It was not until the third century, after very many and gross errors had crept into the church, as I shall presently try to show, that the form of baptism was altered, the first case being that of a man named Novation, who, being very ill, was baptized in bed by infusion, or pouring of water. (Eusebius Eccl. Hist., Book vi., chap. 43. See also Cyprian's Epistles, Letter 76.) Schaff, an eminent Swiss theologian, says that even down to the close of the thirteenth century baptism by immersion was the rule, and sprinkling or pouring the exception. There are many other respectable authorities who show clearly that baptism in the early church was by immersing the whole body in water, and I name some of them here, as follows: Mosheim's Eccl. Hist., Vol. 1, page 120; Boussuet, a celebrated French Bishop; Bishop Jeremy Taylor; Robinson, the great

Biblical scholar and philologist; Calvin; John Wesley. Baptism is a word derived from the Greek "bapto," meaning to immerse, and there is no doubt in my mind that this is the meaning intended wherever the word is used in the New Testament. Calvin says, "The word baptize signifies to immerse, and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church," while John Wesley says, "Buried with him—alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion." Jeremy Taylor writes, "The custom of the ancient church was not sprinkling, but immersion, in pursuance of the sense of the word in the commandment, and the example of our blessed Savior." We are taught that baptism is meant to symbolize a death, a burial, and a resurrection (Rom. 6:3, 4, 5), and also a birth. (John 3:5.) Immersion does this, but sprinkling does not, therefore baptism by sprinkling is erroneous. Then again the Bible teaches that baptism had for its object the remission of sins, and that that ordinance invariably followed upon faith and repentance. But the Church of England does not appear to baptize for the remission of sins at all, the ordinance being considered as only an outward sign of an inward grace, something which appears to be altogether different from the idea of baptism as taught and practiced in the primitive church of Christ. (Mosheim's Church History, 3rd Ed., vol. 1, pp. 87 and 137.) That church laid down that when a person had faith (and we are told that faith comes by hearing) and had fully and truly repented of his sins, he was to receive the ordinance of baptism for the remission of those sins (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:33; Acts 12:16), and that then he would receive the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands by authorized men. (Acts 2:38.) The Church of England, which claims to be led in her doctrines by the very same Spirit that guided the primitive Church in the days of the Apostles, teaches quite another law of baptism, and even demands the baptism of innocent little infants in arms, who can exercise no faith or repentance, and who have no individual sins to repent of. Is not this a transgression of the law in this respect? The primitive Church and the Church of England cannot both be right, and therefore the same Spirit cannot have permeated both, for, unless we admit this, we must admit that the same Spirit dictates two distinctly opposite laws of baptism unto salvation.

This leads me to the question of infant baptism. Dr. Neander, a great German scholar tells us that Christ did not ordain infant baptism, and that not till so late a period as

Irenaeus does any trace of infant baptism appear. This was in the third century. Curcellaeus writes that baptism of infants in the first two centuries after Christ was altogether unknown. Bishop Jeremy Taylor says, "Christ blessed infants and so dismissed them, but baptized them not, therefore infants are not to be baptized." Martin Luther says, "It cannot be proved by the sacred scriptures that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the Apostles." Tertullian, one of the Latin Fathers, wrote, "Let them therefore come when they are grown up, when they can understand, when they are taught whither they are to come. Let them become Christians when they can know Christ. Why should this innocent age hasten to the remission of sins? * * * * If persons understood the importance of baptism they will rather fear the consequent obligation than the delay."

The Church of England, of which I was a member, baptizes infants in arms, who, as I have already said, cannot have faith, nor can they repent, and indeed they have no sins to repent of. I have been told that there is the thing within them of original sin of Adam, but it seems to me that an infant is perfect in Jesus Christ. No one but Adam committed the original sin for which, in God's righteous justice, the sentence was death, and this death passed upon all Adam's descendants, but God, whose very attributes are justice and mercy, made a way for Adam's posterity to escape from the consequences of a sin that not one of them was guilty of. So, in order that His justice should not be cruel, our good Father in Heaven sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to the earth to atone for all sins, not only for our own individual sins, but for the sins of our common father Adam. Thus the world was relieved of the curse passed upon Adam; for "as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Rom. 5:12-19.) The salvation is just as universal as the punishment; and we have nothing to do ourselves to obtain this salvation from the consequences of Adam's transgression, for which we were in no way responsible. Christ's atonement fully met God's righteous justice, and justice having been satisfied, mercy was able to step in between it and ourselves to claim her own. For our own individual sins we are of course responsible. We shall reap as we sow, and we shall be judged according to our works, whether they be good or bad, but we shall not be judged for Adam's sin. This is, I think

evident from the following scriptures: II Cor. 5:10; Rom. 2:6; Gal. 6:7; Eph. 6:8; Col. 3:24, 25; Rev. 22:12; Matt. 16:27.

Children, then, up to the age at which they can clearly distinguish between right and wrong, and can receive the commandments and laws of God, are without sin, for sin is the transgression of the law, known to be God's law. Thus little children have no sins to be repented of and to be remitted and therefore do not need baptism. Baptism is an ordinance by which we witness to God that we have repented of our past misdeeds and have taken upon ourselves the name of Christ; that we intend, by being buried with Him in the waters of baptism, and by rising again from the watery grave, to die unto sin, and to rise again to a new life of holiness and good works, in thankful remembrance of Christ's great love in saving us from the dreadful consequences of our own wicked acts. Baptism cannot therefore be necessary until we raise our wills against God and disobey what we clearly know to be His righteous commandments. To say that an infant requires baptism appears to be not only unscriptural but equivalent to denying the tender mercies of Christ. Little children are perfect in Him, and thus He was able to say, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for such is the kingdom of God." (Matt. 19:14; Mark 10:14; Luke 18:16.)

Thus I have tried to show how, in my opinion, the Church of England has turned aside from the early church teachings and has transgressed this law of baptism, which the Bible instructs us has for its objects the remission of sins (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16), has changed the ordinance by substituting sprinkling for immersion, and has broken the everlasting covenant by practically denying the all-sufficiency of Christ's atonement, in holding that an innocent infant cannot belong to Christ's fold unless it is baptized into it; forgetting that it is only after we have arrived at years of discretion and understanding that we wander away from Christ's fold, and that we are required to pass through the waters of baptism in order to get our sins washed away, and to re-enter that fold. The prophecy of Isaiah, which I have already quoted (Isaiah 24:5), thus seems to me to be applicable to the Church of England in respect to this subject of baptism, if in respect to no other ordinance.

The next ordinance that I would draw attention to is that of baptism for the dead. This has been altogether done away in the Church of England, though it was extensively prac-

ticed in the primitive church. St. Paul in writing to the Corinthians says: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead? (I Cor. 15:29.) This baptism for the dead is one of the most glorious subjects belonging to the everlasting Gospel, because, in order to prove good our title to the kingdom of heaven, we who have sinned are told that we must have the three great witnesses to adoption: namely, the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood. (I John 5:8.) We know by scripture that the Gospel is preached to the dead (I Peter 3:19, 20, 21); and the reason is that the dead are to be judged as men in the flesh, and live according to God in the Spirit. (I Peter 4:6.) Hence the necessity of baptism for those of them who had not during this life been baptized by immersion for the remission of their sins. The dead rely upon us who are living for the performance on their behalf of this ordinance. This is the work that children must do for their progenitors, and on learning this, the hearts of the children are turned to their fathers and the fathers in the spirit world, learning that they are dependent upon the action of their posterity for the performance of this ordinance of salvation, turn their hearts to their children, or in other words look to them for the necessary performance. This was the work predicted in the scripture by the Prophet Malachi, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (Mal. 4:5, 6.)

This baptism for the dead was an old doctrine taught in the primitive church, and it is evident that St. Paul spoke of a baptism which a living person received in place of a dead one. (Biblical Literature, Kitto.) This vicarious baptism for the dead was practiced among the early Christians for some two or three centuries after Christ, and Epiphanius, a writer of the fourth century, speaks of this ordinance when referring to the Marcionites, a sect of Christians to whom he was opposed. (Heresies 23:7.) The view that St. Paul spoke of a baptism that a living man receives in place of a dead one, is upheld by many respectable authorities, among them Erasmus, Scaliger, Grotius, Calixtus, Meyer, and De Wette. (Roberts' Outlines of Eccl. Hist., Note 3 to sec. 10 of part 4.) Then again, if we look at the proceedings of the Council of Carthage held A. D. 379, it will be seen that baptism for the dead was being prac-

ticed among some at least of the Christians as late as that year, for the council's sixth canon forbids any longer the administration of baptism and holy communion for the dead. (Roberts' Gospel, 1893; p. 290.)

The beauty of this doctrine is that it very clearly indicates that there cannot be a never ending punishment for those who die unconverted, as taught in the churches of Christendom. On the contrary, after they have been judged according to their works in the body, and have undergone such punishment as the perfectly righteous God adjudges, there will be a salvation for all, except the sons of perdition; and eventually Jesus Christ will present to His Father His completed work of redemption. Else what are the meanings of such texts as the following? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and NOW is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (John 5:25.) "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." (Isaiah 42:67.) Isaiah also, after he had described the judgments that would attend the coming in glory of Jesus Christ, and the punishments that should overtake the ungodly, wrote as follows: "And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited." (Isaiah 24:21-22.)

Thus the Gospel has to be preached to the spirit world, and those who then hear it in its purity for the first time, as it was preached in the first days of the Church of Christ, will look anxiously to their living descendants to perform for them the outward ordinances of baptism, or the birth of water, without which one of the three earthly witnesses to adoption into God's kingdom (water) will be wanting in their case. For one of the requisite ordinances of the Gospel will not have been complied with by them while on earth, namely, baptism by immersion for the remission of their sins.

That this doctrine of baptism for the dead, which of itself is clear evidence of the loving, merciful, and long suffering character of our Heavenly Father, was forbidden at the Council of Carthage, is scarcely to be wondered at when we study the

history of the church and the character of her ministers in the fourth century. For it was a time when the priesthood was steeped in iniquity, and the church dreadfully tainted with Arianism and Pelagianism, while the corrupt doctrines of the Nestorians and Eutychians infected both the priests and the people of the Christian world. Indeed, when we look into the early history of the mother church of Rome from the third century, we can see how, even in those early times, the church had become practically a motley mass of heathens. From A. D. 66 to A. D. 312 the primitive Church was repeatedly under general persecution, which almost destroyed it, and during this time many who had professed Christianity apostatized. At the same time gross errors began to creep into the church, particularly the teachings of the gnostics, who formed abominable tenets by mixing heathen philosophy with the Gospel of Christ. In the fourth century, however, with the accession of Constantine to the imperial throne of Rome in A. D. 323, all persecutions ceased, and peace was assured to the church, and even more than peace, for Constantine favored the Christian cause, and did what he could do to suppress the pagan religion. The ministers of the Christian church were honored in every way, and wealth and position conferred upon them, so that it is not a matter of wonder that thousands of converts immediately afterwards joined the church and Christianity soon became the national religion. All this, however, instead of being fortunate for the church, was disastrous to the purity of Christ's religion. In the fourth century lordly bishops, archdeacons, canonical singers, etc., were introduced; candles were lighted by day; incense burnt; abstinence from marriage was esteemed a high degree of sanctity; prayers were made to departed saints; pretended relics were held in high estimation; images of Christ and of saints were set up; the clergy commenced to officiate in canonical robes which they held to be sacred; prayers were made for the mitigation of torments to the damned; pilgrimages were started to certain shrines; and a monkish retirement from fellowship with mankind was considered a devotion. By the end of the sixth century the doctrines of the church were deeply infected with Pelagianism (the Pelagians denied the necessity of Christ's righteousness for our justification or of His Spirit's influence to regenerate the heart), and discipline had become corrupt, remiss, and partial, while the principal concern of the leading clergy was who should be the greatest. Then followed the notion of purgatory, and the

worship of the Virgin Mary and of the martyrs, while Gregory the Great, bishop of Rome, added new canons of mass, his canticles and antiphons and many new ordinances concerning litanies, processions, lent, oblations for the dead, pontifical robes, consecrations, and relics. About the year A. D. 606 or 608, Phocas, a monster of cruelty and treachery, who had murdered his worthy master Mauritius and family, became emperor of the East, and Boniface III, the bishop of Rome, by fulsome flatteries, obtained his imperial appointment to be the universal bishop of the Christian church, and thus become the so-called vicar of Christ on earth (Geography and History of Nations, by the Rev. John Brown.)

In the face of this condition of the church, it is not a matter for astonishment that the pure and unadulterated Gospel became lost to the world, and that the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, which the primitive church so freely enjoyed, were no longer to be seen.

Later on, in A. D. 1517, Zwingli in Switzerland, and Luther in Germany, shocked with the blasphemous manner in which papal pardons of, and indulgences in, sin were exposed for sale, openly declared their detestation of them. The result was the rebellion against the Romish church, commonly known as the Reformation, which brought in its train persecutions, massacres, wars, blasphemies, scandals, and the prohibition of certain books. That the reformers in separating themselves from the Church of Rome did immense good, there can be no question; and this good has been going on ever since in the way of preparing men's hearts to accept the simple truths of the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ. But they could not have brought out of that church what I believe it could not possibly have possessed at the time, having lost it through the infidelity which has been so clearly described by Wesley, and also in the second homily of the Church of England—namely, divine authority to administer in the holy ordinances, and to confer the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. For, as I have before said, the Holy Ghost had for some centuries ceased to manifest His presence as in the first days of Christ's Church, while the Bible very distinctly shows us that, wherever God's Spirit has been given to His church and people, He has invariably manifested Himself in many miraculous ways. Thus it seems to me that these reformers, good men as they were, had not the authority to introduce into the world a gospel that had been practically lost, the only gospel on earth at the time,

being one in a very mutilated and changed form indeed. The true Gospel, with its organization and all its mighty powers of prophecy, healing, and other miracles, could not be brought again to the earth except by the hand of an angel of God. That this was to be the case we read in the writing of John the Revelator (Rev. 14:6), where it is distinctly shown that the Gospel once delivered to the saints was to be taken away from the earth. Otherwise there would apparently have been no object in the Gospel being sent again from heaven in the last days, when the hour of his judgment would come, with the object that it might be preached, not to a few people only, but to them that dwell on the earth; to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. No one is excepted, for in God's plan of life and salvation for mankind all on the earth are to hear and receive or reject this pure Gospel. Direct communication from heaven to earth had ceased for many centuries, resulting in the numerous schisms, the various doctrines, and the many unhappy dissensions and quarrels which have broken up the church and led so greatly to the increase of that atheism and materialism which are now everywhere apparent in the world. The result of the falling away, of which the churches of Christendom have been guilty so long, is appalling, and God's judgments in wars, pestilences, and famines, have been continued, in order to warn and to bring men to repentance and to draw them back to the true faith.

The remarks of John Wesley will give some idea of the dreadful condition into which the churches of Christendom had fallen. He said that the reason why the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were no longer to be seen was because the love of many had waxed cold, and Christians had turned heathens again, and had only a dead form left (Wesley's Works, vol. 7, sermon 89, pp. 26, 27.)

Read also what the Church of England herself admits in her homily against perils of idolatry:

"Laity and clergy, learned and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees, have been drowned in abominable idolatry most detested by God, and damnable to man, for eight hundred years or more." Such being the case, how can anyone suppose for a moment that divine authority could possibly have been conferred on the priesthood by the laying on of hands of men who, in this homily, are included among idolaters. On the contrary, it would be more probable that this fallen condition of the church would have closed the heavens to all direct com-

munication with the earth. And this seems to have occurred, for, for centuries past, prophecy has ceased, God no longer calls men directly by His voice as He did Moses, Samuel, and Paul; angels do not now deliver heavenly messages to men, and miracles and signs are no longer made manifest through the power of God as of old. And what is the result? It is, so it seems to me, that, for lack of the spirit of revelation and prophecy, which alone could declare God's will to His church, and which could predict with certainty coming events, and so warn the church of impending danger and guide her into all truth, the ministers of the churches of Christendom have been thrown back upon ingenuity to teach men the fear of the Lord by human precepts. Thus is fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy regarding the latter days of the earth, "Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men," etc. (Isaiah 29:13.) It is evidently altogether due to the precepts of men that there are so many and different doctrines taught, and that so much uncertainty, and doubt, coupled with dissensions, disputes, and ill will, are rampant in the churches of Christendom, instead of unity, love, brotherly kindness, sympathy, and peace. The Church of England, too, is divided against herself, and has split up into High, Broad, and Low church, all more or less in discord, and each teaching doctrine with which the rest have no sympathy; some teachers urging the necessity of confession, and of prayer for the dead, while others view all such doctrines as "popish," and as emanating from the evil one; some believe in the doctrine of transubstantiation, while others altogether reject it and some again consider it necessary to introduce into their worship much pomp and ceremony, with genuflections and incense, while others will permit of only the simplest forms of worship possible, viewing with distaste the gorgeous displays and robes used by the ritualistic members of the church.

In the midst of all this confusion one could only ask, Which is right and which is wrong? or are they all wrong together? I looked for the fruits of the Spirit in the different parts of the church, but I found the laws transgressed and the ordinances changed, and I could see only dissension in place of unity, and disputes instead of peace. Thus it became impossible for me to continue to give my adherence and support to any branch of the church in which I had been brought up. It was difficult to break away from all old associations and from a church in which I had

long reposed the fullest faith and confidence, but it was impossible for me to continue one of her members, as soon as it had become quite patent to my mind that she was advocating and teaching a perverted gospel; and when I clearly saw that she was in error in denying the necessity of Apostles and Prophets, and the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, as essential portions and adjuncts of the Church of Christ in these days.

While pondering over these matters the meaning of the following prophetic words of Jeremiah became clear to me, words, be it remembered, which the Gentiles were to say in the latter days of the earth, at the time when God had commenced to take in hand His work of gathering together the dispersed children of Israel: "Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity and things wherein there is no profit." (Jer. 16:19.) This prophecy is being fulfilled, for thousands of converts have already said these words in their hearts, if not actually with their lips, and I among them, and thousands yet will say them before the end comes. In this connection another scripture has greatly impressed itself upon my mind, namely the words addressed by St. Paul to the Galatians, when warning them against some who had perverted the Gospel of Christ even in those early days of the church. He said, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:8, 9.)

Thus I lost all confidence in the Church of England, and as I fully realized that I had a soul to be saved, regarding which I was naturally anxious, and as I was at the same time well assured in my mind that there could not possibly be more than one true plan of life and salvation, and that one the pure Gospel as had been taught by Jesus Christ and His Apostles, I turned about to find a church that taught that Gospel, as laid down in its simplicity in the good old book. A church organized as was the primitive Church, with Apostles, Prophets, etc., which the inspired writers of old taught as being absolutely necessary, and a church which enjoyed the promised gifts and powers of the Holy Spirit. Such a church I found among the Latter-day Saints, one similar in all ways to the primitive Church, with her divine authority, and the marvelous manifestations of the Holy Spirit as promised by Messiah to all true believers, manifestations to which thousands of good, earnest Christian men and women can bear the most direct and truthful testimony.

On studying the history of this church I was greatly struck with the wonderful faith displayed by the Latter-day Saints, during the dreadful persecutions through which they have had to pass, and the trials and hopes, and sufferings which they have had to endure; with the beautiful spirit which manifested itself in the martyrs, and with the marvelous manner in which God sustained the Saints in their ejection from the circle of all civilization, and throughout their march of fifteen hundred miles through the wilderness into the wilds of the Rocky Mountains, to a place of which they had absolutely no previous knowledge, but to which He led them in safety. The truth, for which this people suffered, and even accepted martyrdom, now floats over the world, and converts are multiplying rapidly. No one who will read the whole history of the Latter-day Saints with a truly honest and unprejudiced heart, and look upon the blessings of prosperity which they at present enjoy, can for a moment doubt that they are members of a church which is under the direct guidance of God through new revelation. The only religion as taught in the Bible (but which churches that profess to believe in that Bible seem to deny) is the faith of visions, miracles, angels, revelations, and prophets. The ancient saints believed such a religion, as all their teachings clearly show us, and looked for and expected to enjoy immediate intercourse with God and angels. The Latter-day Saints believe in such a religion too, and are greatly blessed with such intercourse so long as they are faithful and live up to their glorious privileges, and endure as seeing Him who is invisible. Thus they are in direct enjoyment of that pure Gospel which was to be brought down again to earth by the hands of an angel, as seen by St. John in his vision on the Isle of Patmos. (Rev. 14:6.) This vision had reference to the bringing again to earth of the Gospel long after the days of our Lord, for St. John saw it many years after Christ had died, risen from the grave, and ascended into heaven, that is to say, long after Jesus had Himself brought the Gospel to the earth; and this restoration of the true Gospel to every nation and kindred and tongue and people would not have been necessary if the Gospel in its perfection had not been lost. St. John also clearly tells us that this restoration was to be in the last days of this world, for he writes that the angel, in bringing down this Gospel, would point out that the hour of God's judgment had come, and he adds that another angel would immediately follow, saying "Babylon is fallen." (Rev. 14:7, 8.) Thus he refers clearly to the last days of this probationary time on earth, and there are many things which indicate to believers

that we are living in these latter days, when the hour of God's judgment has come, and when we may expect soon to see Christ making His promised appearance in glory. We ought not therefore to be astonished to find that God, in His mercy and goodness towards the children of men, has at last sent that very Gospel to the earth as He had revealed His purpose to St. John the Revelator.

This Gospel would naturally have to be committed to some chosen human being, for it is always through some selected one of His creatures that God has sent to the people of the earth His warnings, reproofs, instructions, threatenings for evil, and promises for righteousness, and why should He not have chosen young Joseph Smith to receive the restored Gospel as well as any other individual? He at least is the only one who claims to have received it as it was to come from the hands of an angel, and I am quite sure that any one who will read with a fair and unprejudiced mind the teachings of Joseph Smith cannot but conclude that he must have been inspired. Especially will this appear when they consider the fact that all the great and marvelous work which he performed before his martyrdom was accomplished while he was still a young man, and that he, like the Apostles of old, had never enjoyed the privileges of education or experience. I think, too, that those who will, with honest hearts, ponder over the present dark condition of the world, where anarchism, materialism, and atheism are spreading themselves as a pall over the earth, and hiding the light as a cloud hides the sun, will admit that it is quite time that the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ should again be restored to the earth, especially when they compare the true doctrines and ordinances of that Gospel with the varied and contradictory doctrines and ordinances of the numerous churches and sects of Christendom, so patent in the present day. The history and the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints ought to forcibly impress any and all earnest inquiring souls, who study them without bias, and I would strongly recommend to the attention of such persons a book called "A New Witness for God," by Elder B. H. Roberts. There are other publications of the Latter-day Saints, too, which explain their teachings much more fully and lucidly than I have been able to do in this short exposition of my reasons for leaving the Church of England and joining their church. I shall be glad to lend these books to or to procure new ones for those of my relatives or friends who may desire, in their anxiety for their souls' welfare, to investigate the doctrines further. I can

only say that there is that now within me which enables me to add that I know that the establishment of this church is of divine origin, and that it will extend its borders and stand forever.

Before concluding, I would wish to add a few lines pointing out the manner in which the pure Gospel has been brought again to the earth, and refer to a few texts in scripture which appear to me to bear directly on the establishment of this great work that has been accomplished on the earth in these latter days. I do not purpose lengthening out my remarks by giving a history of the youth of Joseph Smith and the revelations enjoyed by him, inasmuch as there are several books and pamphlets which deal fully with these matters. I will content myself with saying that an angel of God, Moroni by name, appeared to Joseph Smith and showed him a place up in a hill called "Cumorah," in which he would discover certain plates of gold with inscriptions upon them. Joseph Smith went to the hill and found these plates, but did not remove them, as the angel Moroni again appeared and told him that it was not yet time to do so; but on the 22nd of September, 1827, the angel again met Joseph Smith at the hill of Cumorah, and delivered into his hands all the plates, and a curious instrument called Urim and Thummim, which was also found in the stone box together with the plates. Joseph Smith subsequently translated through this instrument such portions of the plates as were not sealed, and this translation is now known as the Book of Mormon. (This instrument consists of two transparent stones, clear as crystal, set in the two rims of a bow, and was always used in ancient times by persons called seers, and through it they received revelations of things past and to come. See also Glossary of Antiquities, etc., at pp. 386 and 387 of Helps to the Study of the Bible.—Oxford Press.) The book contains the history of a colony of Israelites of the tribe of Joseph (Ephraim), who left Jerusalem 600 years B. C., and came to America and who afterwards multiplied very rapidly, and grew into two great nations called the Nephites and the Lamanites. The latter, after many years of warfare, eventually exterminated the former, owing to the fact that the Nephites had departed from the commandments of God, but the Lamanites had themselves become, even before they had destroyed the Nephites, a dark and benighted people under the curse from God on account of their gross iniquities and infidelity. (These Lamanites are the American Indians, and belong to the tribe of Ephraim, are therefore Israelites.) This destruction of the Nephites took place about 400 years after Christ, so that the Book of Mormon gives the

history of the tribe of Joseph (Ephraim) for about 1,000 years, written from time to time by their prophets and seers. It also contains the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all its simplicity and purity, and makes plain some portions of the Bible which, owing to the originals having been lost, and to the numerous translations made from time to time, are now interpreted in different ways by the different denominations of Christendom. Thus it is that the Gospel, as it was in the days of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, and before its doctrines had been tampered with by man, has again been brought to the inhabitants of the earth, as shown in the vision of John the Revelator. (Rev. 14:6.) The scriptures, too, speak of a sealed book (Isa. 29:11), which would be delivered to one "that is not learned," and of a nation which should speak out of the ground with a voice as of one that had a familiar spirit. (Isaiah 29:4.) We who have read the Old and New Testaments seem to be quite familiar with the teachings contained in the Book of Mormon, and the voice speaks to us as one that hath a familiar spirit. Daniel clearly pointed to the setting up of God's Kingdom in the last days, when he made known and interpreted the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar regarding the image which the king had seen in his sleep. For he explained that a stone, cut out of the mountain without hands, would destroy the iron and clay feet of the said image, (Daniel 2:34, 35, 45), and he further interpreted this stone as being a kingdom which God would set up on the earth in the days of the ten kings, which kingdom should never be destroyed, but which should break and consume all the other kingdoms, and would itself stand forever. (Daniel certainly speaks of the latter days, for the ten kings he alludes to represent the ten toes of the image which were to come after the falling to pieces of the fourth kingdom, or Roman Empire. Christ was on earth during the time that Rome governed the world, and long before the time of the kings mentioned by Daniel as representing the ten toes of the image, so this kingdom, which God was to set up, and which was to grow and stand forever, was a kingdom subsequent to the days of the Christ upon earth—Read carefully Daniel 2:31 to 45.) This kingdom of God has now been set up on the earth, for these are the days of the kings referred to, and it will and must grow, and do what God said it would do, for Daniel was inspired when he interpreted the dream, and so he was able to add, "The dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure." (Daniel 2: end of verse 45.)

God moves, we are told, in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform, and so when He brings to pass His strange act,

(Isaiah 28:21), all are solemnly warned not to make a mock of His wonderful work "lest your bands be made strong" (Isaiah 28:22). (Band means affliction and troubles, a metaphor taken from the fetters or bands put upon prisoners.) We should always remember that God's course is usually very different from that which the wisdom of the world would mark out for Him, and that He, by His acts, destroys the wisdom of the wise and brings to nothing the understanding of the prudent. (I Cor. 1:19.) So we should be very careful indeed before we reject that which we do not understand, or which does not exactly fit in with our views of what things ought to be. The voice of the ancient prophets and seers of the tribe of Ephraim (the Lamanites or American Indians) has now at last spoken out of the dust (Isaiah 29:4), in the discovery of their writings on the plates of gold, which had been buried in the hill Cumorah and they testify to Christ and His pure Gospel plan of life and salvation. They also inform us that Christ visited the Nephites after His resurrection in Jerusalem and His ascension into heaven and thus were fulfilled His words to the Jews that He had other sheep which were not of that fold with which He then was, and that they also were to hear His voice. (John 10:16.) Some of the prophets of the Bible speak of Ephraim also, and I think that their words have been fulfilled in the discovery of the Book of Mormon as written on the plates of gold. For instance, the prophet, Hosea, speaking under divine inspiration, says, "I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing." (Hosea 8:12.) Here is a clear statement that God's laws were given in writing to the tribe of Ephraim, and that they would be considered a strange thing. There is also a prophecy of Ezekiel, referring clearly to the latter days, when the time of the gathering together of Israel was to arrive, and when they were soon to become one nation again under one king. He speaks therein of the stick of Judah (the Bible) and the stick of Ephraim (Book of Mormon), being joined together and made one stick. (Ezek. 37:15 to 28.) It should be understood that ancient writings used to be rolled on sticks, and that they were consequently frequently termed sticks in the Bible. It was when this Book of Mormon (so called because the last of the ancient prophets of the Nephites named Mormon compiled it, 400 years after Christ, from the writings of the former prophets and leaders of the people), was to be discovered engraved on plates, and was to be translated; that it and the Bible were to become one in their testimony. And it seems evident to me that some passages in the Bible, not very

easy to understand, are now made plain by the Book of Mormon. Thus truth has sprung out of the earth, and righteousness has looked down from heaven. (Psalm 85:11.)

If more evidence is necessary to show that the Book of Mormon is of divine origin, one has only to read its account of the destruction and burial of old cities, and to compare these with the great discoveries made on the continent of America by travelers and antiquarians, that have excited the curiosity and wonder of the world. (Spencer's Letters, letter 7, p. 84.) These discoveries, I need scarcely add, were made long after the Book of Mormon had been translated and published to the world, and relate to the destroyed cities spoken of therein. There can, I consider, be no doubt whatever that the Book of Mormon is equally as much of divine origin as is the Bible, and I believe that all unprejudiced minds, after a careful study of it, will readily arrive at the same conclusion. Does any one suppose for a moment that an individual, not divinely inspired, could possibly sit down and write the Old and New Testaments exactly as they are, in full harmony with each other and dealing so minutely, as they do, with all matters necessary for the salvation, justification, and sanctification of mankind? Neither is it possible for an uninspired person, however good, earnest, and God-fearing such person may be, to write such a book as the Book of Mormon. I bear this testimony that that book came from God (just as I know that the Bible did), and that, in this last dispensation of time, He has committed to the Prophet Joseph Smith the pure Gospel, as it once had been delivered to the saints in the primitive Church, and that Christ's kingdom, the same kingdom as that of which Daniel wrote (Daniel 2:44), has been set up on the earth for the last time.

I think I have sufficiently explained my reasons for leaving the Church of England and joining what I know to be the only true Church of Christ on earth. I willingly admit that in the Church of England, and also in the other churches and sects of Christendom, there are thousands of good, earnest souls seeking after God, and living up to what they believe to be the truth, and God is always faithful to remember all such, and to lift them up. Indeed Christ will, I believe, eventually redeem mankind (except the few sons of perdition who commit the unpardonable sin), but I would add that there is but one plan of life and salvation that will exalt us into the highest or celestial kingdom of the Father, and that plan includes true faith and repentance, followed (as taught by Christ and His Apostles) by baptism by immersion

for the remission of sins, and by the laying on of hands of those in authority from God, for the reception of the Holy Ghost. I need scarcely add that we have after this to "work out our own salvation, with fear and trembling," as St. Paul wisely warns us (Philippians 2:12), and also to purify ourselves "even as God is pure" (I John 3:3), and further to remember Christ's own words, "But he that endureth to the end shall be saved." (Matt. 10:22.)

The Bible teaches us that there are different degrees of glory hereafter, and also different resurrections. (John 14:2; I Cor. 15:22, 23; I Cor. 15:40 to 44; II Cor. 12:2; I Thess. 4:16, 17; Rev. 20:5, 6), and we should therefore all strive to be among those who will take part in the first resurrection, and be exalted into the highest or the celestial glory, which is much greater than the terrestrial one, as much so as the terrestrial glory is greater than the telestial. God's plan is plain, and is recorded in the Bible, so that all can turn and read, therefore there cannot possibly be any excuse for those who have the opportunity placed before them of inquiring into and studying the Gospel for themselves, if they fail so to do.

I have written this article, if I may so term these explanatory remarks, for the information of my family, and of those who may in any way be interested in me, because I have been asked many questions on the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and some have doubtless wondered what there was in that church which could have influenced me to desert the Church of England and throw in my lot with the Saints. To all such I would reply in all humility that the teachings of the Latter-day Saints, and their ordinances, are in all respects thoroughly scriptural, and strictly in accordance with those of the primitive Church established by Jesus Christ Himself, while the Church of England does not appear to me to be correct or scriptural in many of her teachings and ordinances. I have taken the Bible, and the Bible alone, as my guide, and I most assuredly would not have become a Latter-day Saint had I not found the doctrines and practices of this people to accord with those of the New Testament, or had I found the church to be wanting in any of these principles which the Bible tells us are absolutely necessary to make up the true Church of Jesus Christ on earth. What some of these essentials are I have already endeavored to show, to the best of my ability, in these pages, and I am convinced that without them there can be no true Church of Christ anywhere, otherwise I altogether fail to see the use of our taking the word of God, as the Bible admittedly

is, as a guide to the truth. If we admit that God's word is inspired, then it is not within the authority of any mortal man to alter any part of it, or to spiritualize or explain away any of the many plain commandments that are in the book. There is but one Gospel for our salvation, with its ordinances, its commandments, and its marvelous and powerful gifts, very clearly laid down in the Bible, and no church which does not practice and teach the same plan of life and salvation can possibly be right. Indeed, we know that in the very early days of the Christian church, when false teachers had commenced to pervert the true Gospel, and to teach a gospel which contained some errors, St. Paul denounced them in his letter to the Galatian Christians in the strongest terms of condemnation, saying: "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:8.) This ought to be to us a very great warning, coming as it does from the pen of an inspired writer and apostle, and we would do well, believe me, to take it to heart and consider it.

In conclusion, I would advise those who may read these pages to think well over their contents, and to ask God to show them how far there is His truth in the doctrines and ordinances of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, doctrines and ordinances which I have tried to show are in strict accordance with the Gospel of Jesus Christ Himself. The Apostle James tells us that God will always give wisdom to all that ask Him for it in true and faithful prayer, for he writes as follows: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." (James 1:5, 6, 7.) This scripture shows us that we should pray in the fullest confidence that God is only waiting to be gracious to us, and that he does not make a promise that He cannot or will not perform, but His ears will ever be open to true and faithful prayer; and we know that He is always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and to give us more than we are at any time deserving of.

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